

# APA Moves to Meet Future Challenges

By Robert U. Brown

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico  
On its 25th anniversary the  
Inter American Press Associa-  
tion plans to take a close look  
at the past and present and to  
chart a course for the future.

The first official action of Lee  
Hills, president of the Knight  
Newspapers, who was elected  
APA president to succeed Julio  
de Mesquita Filho of *O Estado*  
*Sao Paulo*, Brazil, was to name  
a "Committee on the Future of  
APA" to "seek the path ahead  
and how we are to travel it."

Hills noted the successes of  
APA in fighting for a free press  
in this hemisphere and said  
"while we have an understand-  
able pride in the past, what  
about IAPA at the start of its  
second 25 years?"

"I think we should inject new  
ideas, determine our future  
goals and plan on how to reach  
them. The hemisphere and the  
world are in ferment. Our pro-  
grams should be shaped to meet  
the needs of the galloping  
change."

"The press in such perilous  
times must stand tall and pro-  
vide strong leadership. We must  
be deeply concerned with these  
problems and help in their solu-  
tions."

"The IAPA is regarded in too  
many quarters as an organiza-  
tion of owners concerned chiefly  
with their own interests, and  
putting up a good fight for free-  
dom of the press."

"We shall continue to defend  
press freedom, but I believe our  
efforts can shift dramatically to  
improving the performance of  
that free press in our growing  
complex and explosive society."

"We have made a good start  
on this through the Technical  
Center. Now in its fifth year of  
operation, the Center has em-  
barked on new programs and  
new ideas that broaden its scope."

"I would like to see even more  
of our time and money spent in  
helping newspapermen to im-  
prove their professional compe-  
tence, raising advertising and  
circulation standards and busi-  
ness practices, keeping abreast  
of new methods and techniques,  
improving editorial content and  
public service."

## Growing Problems

"I believe there has been a  
steady improvement of the press  
in our hemisphere. But I ques-  
tion whether it is improving  
rapidly enough to meet the re-

sponsibilities of a job that be-  
comes more difficult each year.  
I am afraid events are outracing  
our progress. . . .

"What we need to determine  
is our future and how we go  
about achieving it. We should  
decide what we want the IAPA  
to accomplish in the next five  
years, or perhaps the next 10  
years, and then start doing the  
things that will make that plan  
a reality. There is no other in-  
ter-American organization that  
has already done so much. There  
is no other inter-American  
organization that has the  
opportunity to do so much more  
in the future than our IAPA,"  
Hills said.

He appointed Andrew Heis-  
kell, chairman of the board of  
Time, Inc., and a past president  
of IAPA, to be chairman of the  
new committee. Others named  
were Agustin Edwards, pub-  
lisher of *El Mercurio*, Santiago,  
Chile, and first vicepresident of  
IAPA; Manoel F. do Nasci-  
mento Brito, publisher of *Jornal*  
*do Brazil*, Rio de Janeiro, and a  
member of the IAPA board;  
Thomas Vail, publisher of the  
*Cleveland Plain Dealer*; and  
David B. Lindsay, Jr., publisher  
of the *Sarasota (Fla.) Herald-  
Tribune*, a member of the IAPA  
board and chairman of the pro-  
gram committee for this con-  
ference.

Hills indicated others would  
be named.

## Officers Elected

Newly elected IAPA officers  
serving with Hills are: First  
Vice President—Agustin Ed-  
wards; Second Vice President—  
James S. Copley, The Copley  
Newspapers; Treasurer—John  
C. A. Watkins, *Providence Jour-  
nal-Bulletin*; Secretary—Luis  
Feldman Josin, *Jornada*, Trelew,  
Argentina.

Mr. Watkins succeeded John  
Brogan of the Hearst Corpora-  
tion who had served as IAPA  
treasurer for 10 years and was  
voted an honorary life member-  
ship.

Robert U. Brown of EDITOR &  
PUBLISHER was re-elected chair-  
man of the Executive Commit-  
tee. Vice Chairmen are Manoel  
do Nascimento Brito and David  
board of directors are: Earle  
B. Lindsay, Jr.

Newly-elected members of the  
Braisted, *Hablemos* magazine,  
New York; Carlos Canelas, *Los*  
*Tiempos*, Cochabamba, Bolivia;

Alberto R. Cellario, *Life en Es-*  
*panol*, New York; and Howard  
Fitzgerald, *Pontiac (Mich.)*  
Press.

## Board Members

Re-elected to the board were:  
Horacio Aguirre, *Diario Las*  
*Americas*, Miami; Riobo Caput-  
to, *El Litoral*, Sante Fe, Ar-  
gentina; James S. Copley; Agus-  
tin Edwards; S. G. Fletcher,  
*Daily Gleaner*, Kingston, Jama-  
ica; Tom Harris, *St. Petersburg*  
(Fla.) *Times*; Ignacio Lozano,  
Jr., *La Opinion*, Los Angeles;  
John H. Perry, Perry Publica-  
tions; E. W. Scripps, Scripps  
League; Juan Valmaggia, *La*  
*Nacion*, Buenos Aires; and  
George Westerman, *Panama*  
*Tribune*, Republic of Panama.

Edward H. Harte, Harte-  
Hanks Newspapers, was elected  
to fill the unexpired term until  
1969 of Carlos Manini Rios, *La*  
*Manana* and *El Diario*, Montevi-  
deo, Uruguay, who resigned  
from the board to enter govern-  
ment service.

Rodolfo Junco de la Vega, Jr.,  
*El Norte*, Monterrey, Mexico,  
was elected president of the  
IAPA Scholarship Fund, Inc., to  
succeed Harold Fitzgerald of the  
Pontiac Press.

Edward W. Scripps was re-  
elected president of the IAPA  
Technical Center, Inc., and John  
Herbert, *Boston Herald Trav-  
eler*, was named a chairman.

Acting on the report of its  
Committee on Freedom of the  
Press under the chairmanship of  
Tom Harris, *St. Petersburg*  
*Times*, who will continue that  
responsibility for another year,  
the IAPA found "an unprece-  
dented climate of press freedom  
existing at this time in this  
hemisphere."

After examining the state of  
the press in the hemisphere, the  
Committee reported:

## Shadows in Argentina

"In Argentina, while there is  
freedom of the press, there are  
shadows over that concept that  
should be removed. The daily  
*El Dia* of La Plata is presently  
being sued by the government  
which is trying to take posses-  
sion of 51% of its stock; the  
government has issued warnings  
to the magazine *Siete Dias Ilus-  
trados* in relation to the content  
of that publication; and the gov-  
ernment has prohibited the pub-  
lication, distribution, and sale  
of the newspaper *Prensa Con-  
fidencial* on the charge that the  
newspaper 'propagates false  
news and insults the chiefs of  
the armed forces.'

"In Brazil, in spite of re-  
strictive but unenforced laws  
that affect the press and the  
Hélio Fernandes incident, the  
press has to continue to main-  
tain its free tradition by amply

fulfilling its duty to inform and  
criticize. Brazil's President, Mar-  
shal Arouche Costa e Silva  
recently guaranteed that right.

"Freedom of the press and  
access to the sources of informa-  
tion,' he said, 'is one of the  
government's ruling principles.  
It is fundamental for the regime  
because the people must know  
what the government is doing  
and how it performs its tasks.'

"The IAPA saw the realiza-  
tion of a long-sought goal this  
year when *Los Tiempos* of Co-  
chabamba resumed publication.  
Reappearance of the paper was  
through the initiative of the  
Canelas family. However, there  
has yet been no indemnifica-  
tion to the owners by the  
government of Bolivia. The situ-  
ation of the closed *La Razon* of  
La Paz remains unchanged.  
There has been no indemnifica-  
tion."

"At this writing Uruguay was  
a country with freedom of the  
press but with only 3 of the 11  
newspapers in Montevideo pub-  
lishing. One of the 3 papers still  
publishing is reportedly a  
mouthpiece for the Communist  
party. The closed papers had  
government subsidies and credit  
for newsprint. They now owe  
the government about \$7 million  
in unpaid taxes and newsprint  
bills."

## 43 Newsmen Imprisoned

"Cuba and Haiti can be  
lumped together as the vicious  
embodiment of the antithesis of  
press freedom and of all human  
freedom. Castro now holds more  
than 43 newsmen in his prisons,  
an increase since our last re-  
port. Papa Doc Duvalier does  
not welcome foreign newsmen  
and we have a report that Haiti  
maintains a black list of cor-  
respondents not permitted to en-  
ter that country."

"Members of IAPA should  
remain alert to Castro's pro-  
gram of international confer-  
ences in Havana designed to in-  
doctrinate newsmen to subvert  
the free press of the Americas.  
Publishers and editors are ad-  
vised to make every effort to  
recognize the difference between  
free press reporters and the  
agents of Communist fronts as  
a safeguard against this threat  
to the free press."

"In the Dominican Republic  
where freedom of the press  
exists there has not yet been  
indemnification, however, to the  
owners of the newspaper *Prensa*  
*Libre*, and the personal case of  
Rafael Bonilla Aybar is still  
pending as is the *La Voz del*  
*Pueblo* suit against the govern-  
ment."

"The old press law which im-  
poses a 7% tax on newspaper  
advertisements is still in effect  
in Chile. The other press law,

known as the 'gag' law has been amended, however, to improve the situation.

"While there is freedom of the press in Ecuador, our Ecuadorean members have pointed out that there are some restrictions to the free importation of newsprint. Your committee reiterates its opposition to all taxation and duties, either by law or international agreement, on the importation of newsprint supplies and machinery for newspapers in this and all countries where such taxes and duties are applied as it feels that they can be used for, or may lead to, curtailment of press freedom. At the same time your committee calls attention to Ecuador's new constitution which guarantees freedom of opinion and expression and says that no government official can suspend, close or stop publication of a newspaper or arrest publishers, editors, reporters or other employees without a judicial warrant. It guarantees the right to information and free access to sources of news.

"Paraguay is one of the few countries that continues to curtail freedom of the press, despite some improvement in the situation. Your committee urges continued attention to Paraguay in the hope that further improvement may be achieved.

"In Nicaragua a repressive press law is still in effect. The oppositional newspaper *La Prensa* is still experiencing difficulty in obtaining access to government news.

"The press law opposed by the newspapers in Honduras had been repealed and the government has invited the press association of Honduras to participate with the government in the drafting of a law satisfactory to the press.

"In Guatemala, while freedom of the press exists, there is a situation of virtual civil war with extremists of both the right and the left exerting pressures on newspapers.

"While the controversy continues in the United States over the fair trial-free press issue, there were welcome developments as the Supreme Court ruling on libel to include public figures in addition to government and public officials as open to fair criticism without the threat of libel, and the freedom of information law that broadened access to government documents and files.

"Perhaps one of the brightest developments in the Americas is that even the military regimes in most cases now respect freedom of the press. This is a change for the better as it gives more people more access to a

(Continued on page 58)

EDITOR & PUBLISHER

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(Continued from page 53)

free press. In general, as we stated before, press freedom has reached an unprecedented level of existence in the hemisphere but almost everywhere, including the United States, sources of information are becoming less accessible.

"Your committee calls attention also to those countries where the governments forbid foreign ownership of newspapers while permitting foreign ownership of other business or property. Your committee expresses the hope that where these laws exist that the responsible government will recognize that they discriminate against the press exclusively in relation to foreign ownership.

"In closing we reiterate the concept that the right to know is a human right and that no publisher or editor or lawyer or judge has the right to bargain away that right or any part of it as is proposed in the fair trial-free press issue. We also firmly stand on the proposition that the best press law is no law at all."

#### Resolutions

In formal resolutions on these matters IAPA asked that a committee be named to call on President Balaguer of the Dominican Republic to find out why action has not been taken as requested by the association; notified the American Bar Association of the IAPA's deep concern about the fair trial proposals which would be "a great disservice to the people" and would affect the whole hemisphere; asked repeal of the press law in Nicaragua; urged the Argentine government to make a judicial study of the facts involving *El Dia* and condemned that government for prohibiting the printing and distribution of *Prensa Confidencial*; censured the arbitrary system established by the city of Buenos Aires to interfere with the distribution of some publications; asked repeal of the Ecuadorean tax of 25% on the importation of all newsprint excepting that from Chile; expressed thanks to the president of Mexico for interceding with the Cuban government in behalf of the imprisoned newspapermen and expressed the hope they will soon have their freedom.

Delegates to the 25th anniversary meeting, and their guests, numbering almost 500, were welcomed to Puerto Rico by Governor Roberto Sanchez Vilella who was introduced by Mrs. Tina Hills, publisher of *El Mundo* and chairman of the Host Committee. The governor also enter-

tained the group at his official residence, La Fortaleza. Sol. M. Linowitz, U.S. Ambassador to the Organization of American States, and Dr. Jaime Benitez, president of the University of Puerto Rico, also spoke to the convention.

The next IAPA General Assembly is scheduled for Buenos Aires next October.

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